



Animas-La Plata Project

Volume 5

U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Reclamation

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Final Supplemental EIS Released



Aerial view of the site for the Durango Pumping Plant, with Ridges Basin in the background.

On July 14, 2000, the Department of the Interior (Interior), through the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), and in cooperation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Ute Mountain Ute and Southern Ute Indian Tribes (Colorado Ute Tribes), released a Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSEIS) for the Animas-La Plata

Project (ALP Project). The FSEIS evaluated the potential impacts of implementing the Colorado Ute Indian Water Rights Settlement Act of 1988 (P.L. 100-585) in order to provide the Colorado Ute Tribes an assured long-term water supply in order to satisfy their senior water rights claims. The FSEIS responded to comments made by the public, agencies and stakeholders on the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) which had been released in January. The FSEIS also supplemented the environmental documents prepared by Reclamation in 1980 and 1996 for the ALP Project, as well as provide an environmental evaluation for the Administration, other involved parties and the public in reaching a final settlement of the water rights claims of the Colorado Ute Tribes.

A Notice of Availability (NOA) of the FSEIS was published in the Federal Register on July 14, 2000, and a "stand-alone" summary of the A-LP Project FSEIS was mailed to over 800 individuals, agencies, and organizations on the A-LP mailing list. The FSEIS is also available on the Internet at <http://www.uc.usbr.gov> under the Environmental Studies, Summaries & Reports link.

Record of Decision Executed

Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt executed a ROD on September 25, 2000 which defined a course of action to implement the 1988 Colorado Ute Indian Water Rights Settlement Act and resolve the status of the ALP Project. The ROD adopted the Bureau of Reclamation's

recommended alternative, Refined Alternative 4. This alternative is a scaled-down ALP project which would involve construction and operation of a 120,000 acre-foot off-stream reservoir at Ridges Basin, a pumping plant on

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